

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T STATE 065353

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CG, TZ

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT NYERERE ON ZAIRE

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 1152

1. WE WELCOME NYERERE'S WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE THE
DIALOGUE ON THE ZAIRE SITUATION. AS HE KNOWS WE ATTACH
GREAT IMPORTANCE TO HIS VIEWS AND INSIGHTS. PERHAPS SOME
OF OUR PERCEPTIONS MIGHT BE USEFUL IN TRYING TO ACHIEVE
MAXIMUM BENEFIT FROM OUR EXCHANGES ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. WE BELIEVE THERE HAS BEEN NO PANIC IN PRESENT SITUATION.
OUR OWN ANALYSIS IS THAT BOTH EUROPEANS AND U.S. HAVE
RESPONDED CAUTIOUSLY AND IN MEASURED WAY TO ASSURE THAT
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THERE IS NO OVERREACTION AND THAT WE CAN CAREFULLY WATCH
THE SITUATION AS IT DEVELOPS. AS NORMAL SUPPLIERS OF
MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ZAIRE, U.S., AS WELL AS BELGIUM AND
FRANCE, TO BEST OUR KNOWLEDGE, HAVE RESPONDED TO LEGITIMATE
NEEDS, NOT WITH THE IDEA OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE ESCALATION
OF VIOLENCE BUT TO HELP FACILITATE THE PROCESS OF AFRICAN
MEDIATION AND SETTLEMENT WHICH SEEMS BEST DESIGNED TO SOLVE

THE PROBLEM. WE ESPECIALLY WISH TO AVOID A SITUATION IN WHICH OUTSIDE POWERS ARE DRAWN INTO AN AFRICAN CONFLICT.

3. OUR APPROACH TO THE SITUATION HAS BEEN TO URGE AND, IF WANTED, ACTIVELY SUPPORT EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM WITHIN AN AFRICAN OR OAU CONTEXT AND OUR EUROPEAN FRIENDS CONCUR IN THIS VIEW.

4. FACT IS THAT ARMED INTRUSION INTO ZAIRE, PROBABLY SUPPORTED BY EXTERNAL FORCES, IS BEING CARRIED OUT BY ONLY ONE ETHNIC GROUP WHICH HAS SUCCESSIVELY FOUGHT FOR KATANGA SECESSION, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (WHEN IT WAS HEADED BY TSHOMBE), AGAINST WHICH IT SUBSEQUENTLY MUTINIED, THE PORTUGUESE AND FINALLY THE MPLA. AS NYERERE IS AWARE, SEPARATIST TENDENCIES IN THE LARGE AND DIVERSE COUNTRY OF ZAIRE, DIFFICULT TO GOVERN UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES, HAVE BEEN PRONOUNCED DURING BOTH ITS COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENT HISTORY. ZAIRE'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, RESULTING IN PART FROM THE DEPRESSED PRICE OF COPPER, TEND TO ACCENTUATE THIS CENTRIFUGAL MOVEMENT. IF PRESENT SITUATION IS UNRESOLVED OR KATANGANS CAN ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN ALL OR PART OF SHABA CHAOS RESEMBLING THAT OF EARLY 60'S COULD WELL REOCCUR.

5. ESSENTIALLY THERE ARE THREE CONSIDERATIONS WHICH HAVE BECOME INTERTWINED: 1) THE FUTURE OF THE GENDARMES, WHO HAVE BEEN OFFERED AMNESTY ON TWO OCCASIONS, IN 1974 AND 1976, AND HOW THEY COULD BE INTEGRATED INTO A UNIFIED ZAIRE; 2) THE LESS THAN SATISFACTORY RELATIONS BETWEEN
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ANGOLA AND ZAIRE; AND 3) THE FINAL RESOLUTION OF THE ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR, THE CONTINUING EXISTENCE OF WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO BORDER INCIDENTS AND VIOLATIONS.

6. NIGERIA, AT MOBUTU'S REQUEST, IS EXPLORING HOW IT CAN HELP MEDIATE THIS DISPUTE AND GARBA'S VISIT HERE LARGELY TAKEN UP WITH THIS QUESTION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT NIGERIANS HAVE COMMUNICATED WITH TANZANIANS ON THIS SUBJECT. WE HAVE MET WITH GARBA AND HAVE EXPRESSED FULL U.S. SUPPORT FOR NIGERIAN - OR OTHER AFRICAN - EFFORTS TO RESOLVE PROBLEM IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PRESERVE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF STATES CONCERNED AND TO AVOID ESCALATION WHICH MAY RESULT IN OUTSIDE INTERVENTION.
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